

INDEX

INDEX	I
List of figures	V
List of tables	XI
Glossary	XII
Abstract	XVII
Resumen	XVIII
Resum	XIX
Introduction	1
1. The muscular system	1
1.1. The skeletal muscle: structure and organization.....	1
1.2. Cell populations in the adult skeletal muscle	2
2. Muscle contraction: structural basis	4
2.1. Excitation-contraction coupling	4
3. Muscle regeneration	5
3.1. Tissue necrosis.....	5
3.2. Inflammatory phase: response to injury	6
3.3. Anti-inflammatory phase: regenerative process.....	7
3.4. Remodelling phase and functional recovery	7
4. Muscle tissue engineering	8
4.1. <i>In vivo</i> MTE.....	9
4.2. <i>In situ</i> MTE	10
4.3. <i>In vitro</i> MTE	10
4.4. Cell sources for skeletal muscle tissue engineering	12
4.5. Bioactive molecules in skeletal muscle tissue engineering	12
4.6. Biomaterials in skeletal muscle tissue engineering.....	13
4.6.1. <i>Polyhydroxyalkanoates</i>	15
4.6.2. <i>Polycaprolactone</i>	16
4.6.3. <i>Poly (vinyl alcohol)</i>	17
4.6.4. <i>Alginate</i>	17
5. Conductive biomaterials for muscle tissue engineering	19
5.1. Conductive polymers	19
5.2. Carbon nanomaterials	20
5.3. Metal nanomaterials	21

Hypothesis and objectives	25
1. Hypothesis	25
2. Objectives	26
Chapter 1	27
Novel semi-interpenetrated polymer networks of poly(3-hydroxybutyrate-co-3-hydroxyvalerate)/poly (vinyl alcohol) with incorporated conductive polypyrrole nanoparticles	28
1. Introduction	29
2. Materials and methods	31
2.1. Materials	31
2.2. Preparation of neat polymers and 30/70 PHBV/PVA blend films	32
2.3. Preparation of PHBV/PVA semi-IPN (PVA crosslinking)	32
2.4. Electroconductive particles embedding.....	32
2.5. Characterisation technique.....	33
2.5.1. <i>Electron microscopy</i>	33
2.5.2. <i>Fourier Transformed Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR)</i>	33
2.5.3. <i>Swelling assay</i>	33
2.5.4. <i>Surface wettability</i>	34
2.5.5. <i>Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC)</i>	34
2.5.6. <i>Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)</i>	34
2.5.7. <i>Conductivity Analysis</i>	34
2.6. Cell culture and biological evaluation.....	35
2.6.1. <i>Cytotoxicity</i>	35
2.6.2. <i>Cell adhesion</i>	35
2.7. Statistical analysis	36
3. Results and discussion	36
3.1. Microstructure and Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy	36
3.2. Swelling properties and surface wettability	40
3.3. Thermal properties	42
3.3.1 <i>Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC)</i>	42
3.3.1.1. <i>PHBV/PVA blends and semi-IPN PHBV/PVA</i>	42
3.3.1.2. <i>Semi-IPN PHBV/PVA with PPy</i>	45
3.3.2. <i>Thermal degradation properties</i>	46
3.3.2.1. <i>PVA/PHBA blend and PHBV/PVA semi-IPN</i>	47
3.3.2.2. <i>PPy nanoparticles in the semi-IPN thermal degradation</i>	48
3.4. Electrical behaviour	49
3.5. Biological evaluation.....	49
4. Conclusions	51
5. Patents	51
6. Acknowledgments	51
7. References	52

Chapter 2	61
Electroactive calcium-alginate/polycaprolactone/reduced graphene oxide nanohybrid hydrogels for skeletal muscle tissue engineering	62
1. Introduction.....	63
2. Materials and methods	64
2.1. Materials	64
2.2. Fabrication of crosslinked SA and semi-IPN SA/PCL 90/10.....	64
2.3. Production of electroactive SA/PCL semi-IPN with embedded rGO nanosheets..	65
2.4. Characterization techniques.....	65
2.4.1. <i>Electron Microscopy</i>	65
2.4.2. <i>Atomic Force Microscopy</i>	66
2.4.3. <i>Fourier Transformed Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR)</i>	66
2.4.4. <i>Swelling assay</i>	66
2.4.5. <i>Surface wettability</i>	66
2.4.6. <i>Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC)</i>	66
2.4.7. <i>Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)</i>	66
2.4.8. <i>Mechanical properties</i>	66
2.4.9. <i>Electrical properties</i>	67
2.5. Cell culture and biological characterization.....	67
2.5.1. <i>Cytotoxicity</i>	67
2.5.2. <i>Cell adhesion</i>	68
2.5.3. <i>Myogenic differentiation</i>	68
2.6. Statistical analysis	68
3. Results and Discussion	69
3.1. Microstructure	69
3.2. Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy	70
3.3. Swelling and surface wettability	72
3.4. Thermal and mechanical properties	73
3.4.1. <i>Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC)</i>	73
3.4.2. <i>Thermogravimetry analysis (TGA)</i>	75
3.4.3. <i>Mechanical properties</i>	75
3.5. Electrical conductivity	76
3.6. Biocompatibility.....	76
3.7. Myoblast adhesion on semi-IPN SA/PCL-E and nanohybrid hydrogels	76
3.8. Myoblast differentiation on semi-IPN SA/PCL-E and nanohybrid hydrogels	78
4. Conclusions	80
5. Acknowledgements.....	80
6. References	80

Chapter 3	89
Pro-myogenic environment promoted by the synergistic effect of conductive polymer nanocomposites combined with extracellular zinc ions	90
1. Introduction.....	91
2. Materials and methods	93
2.1. Materials	93
2.2. Preparation of conductive cell substrates	93
2.3. Morphological and physicochemical characterization of conductive cell substrates.....	93
2.4. Biological Evaluation	94
2.4.1. Cell Culture	94
2.4.2. Cytotoxicity.....	95
2.4.3. Cell Adhesion	95
2.4.4. Proliferation	96
2.4.5. Myogenic Differentiation	96
2.4.6. Gene Expression Analysis	96
2.5. Statistical analysis	97
3. Results	97
3.1. Morphology and physicochemical Properties of PCL/G Nanocomposites	97
3.1.1. Morphology	97
3.1.2. Thermal properties and degradation.....	98
3.1.3. Mechanical and electrical properties	98
3.2. Biological performance.....	99
3.2.1. Effect of a conductive surface and exogeneous Zn ions on biocompatibility and cell adhesion	99
3.2.2. Effect of a conductive surface and exogeneous Zn ²⁺ ions on myoblast proliferation and differentiation.....	100
4. Discussion.....	102
5. Conclusions	106
6. Acknowledgments.....	107
7. Supplementary information.....	107
8. References	108
Discussion.....	117
Future perspectives	123
Scientific contributions	125
1. Publications in scientific journals.....	125
2. Intellectual property	126
3. International conferences.....	126
4. Academic contributions	127
References	129